

Remarks

Claims 136-156 and 158-177 are pending in the subject application. By this Amendment, Applicants have added new claims 179 and 180, canceled claims 137-139, 141-144, 148, 149, 151, 156-160, 164, and 165 and amended claims 136 and 155. Support for the amendments and new claims can be found throughout the subject specification and in the claims as originally filed. Entry and consideration of the amendments presented herein is respectfully requested. Accordingly, claims 136, 140, 145-147, 150, 152-155, 161-163, and 166-180 are currently before the Examiner and read on the elected invention. Favorable consideration of the pending claims is respectfully requested.

As an initial matter, Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 112, 102(e), and 103(a) and the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting rejection.

Claims 136, 139-141, 144-147, 149-155, 158, 160-163, and 165-177 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Sharma *et al.* (1995), Merritt (1998), Saneii *et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 5,746,982), Wang *et al.* (1998), Lipinski *et al.* (1997). The Office Action indicates that a method that utilizes "Spotfire software" has been searched and was not found in the prior art. Accordingly, Applicants have amended the claims to recite the use of spotfire software in the claimed method steps to place the subject application in condition for allowance and conclude prosecution of this application. Applicants expressly reserve the right to pursue any subject matter disclosed and/or previously claimed in continuation applications. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 USC §103(a) is respectfully requested.

It should be understood that the amendments presented herein have been made solely to expedite prosecution of the subject application to completion and should not be construed as an indication of Applicants' agreement with or acquiescence in the Examiner's position. Applicants expressly reserve the right to pursue the invention(s) disclosed in the subject application, including any subject matter canceled or not pursued during prosecution of the subject application, in a related application.

In view of the foregoing remarks and amendments to the claims, Applicants believe that the currently pending claims are in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

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The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees under 37 CFR §§1.16 or 1.17 as required by this paper to Deposit Account No. 19-0065.

Applicants invite the Examiner to call the undersigned if clarification is needed on any of this response, or if the Examiner believes a telephonic interview would expedite the prosecution of the subject application to completion.

Respectfully submitted,



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